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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,018	01/14/2004	Lawrence J. Tarantino		3311

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EXAMINER

EDELL, JOSEPH F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3636

DATE MAILED: 10/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/757,018

Applicant(s)

TARANTINO ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph F Edell

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 5-8 are objected to because of the following informalities:
 - a. claim 5, line 1, "(EVA)" should be removed;
 - b. claims 6-8, line 1, "EVA" should read --ethylene vinyl acetate--.Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 5, 7, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,286,089 to Goldman.

Goldman discloses a modularly design furniture that includes all the limitations recited in claims 5,7, and 8. Goldman shows a modularly design furniture having slabs 44,46,48 (Fig. 4) of ethylene vinyl acetate foam having a density ranging from 35 to 45 kg/m³ wherein the slabs have a nested pattern and laminated to each other by adhesive (see column 5, lines 33-36). Language of claim 8 reciting "the slabs of EVA foam are formed to a specific size by band saw and ground to smooth finish" is considered a

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product-by-process limitation wherein the claim is evaluated based on the end product implied by the process rather than the process itself. See § MPEP 2113.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,971,165 to Levins.

Levins discloses a modularly design furniture that is basically the same as that recited in claims 5 and 6 except the density of the slabs is not specified, as recited in the claims. See Figures 1-4 of Levins for the teaching that a modularly design furniture has slabs 10-18 (Fig. 1) of ethylene vinyl acetate foam. Although the density of the EVA foam slabs is not specifically recited, modifying the density range would have been obvious at the time of Applicant's invention because the use of preferred materials and optimum or workable ranges discovered by routine experimentation is ordinarily within the skill of the art. Further, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the density of the EVA foam slabs since the Applicant has not disclosed that having the specific density solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the slabs would perform equally well with an well known density range used in the art.

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Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The following patents are cited to further show the state of the art with respect to modularly designed furnitures:

U.S. Pat. No. 3,743,353 to Lupinsky

U.S. Pat. No. 4,067,615 to Gehry

U.S. Pat. No. 4,235,473 to Aginar

U.S. Pat. No. 4,868,940 to Masadi

U.S. Pat. No. 5,240,528 to Pagni

U.S. Pat. No. 5,407,248 to Jay et al.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,423,597 to Rogers


JP Publ. No. 56-15258 to SANPN

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph F. Edell whose telephone number is (703) 605-1216. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-5:00pm.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JE

September 27, 2004


Peter M. Cuomo
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600